

of some of the revenue departments in Mysore calls for the employment of an agency independent of such departments, qualified for examining accounts and capable of discovering errors, frauds and short credits in respect of revenue due to Government. The ordinary staff—subordinate and superior—of the revenue departments engaged in keeping and examining accounts cannot be expected to possess any special knowledge of accounts work and the inspection of their accounts by an expert agency is likely to discover points not generally noticeable by departmental officers.

8. Taking the Land Revenue Department, for instance, it has long been recognised that its accounts relating to demand, arrear and current, require overhauling. The demand according to the taluk and district accounts does not agree with that as shown in the village accounts. The demand under "contributions" in respect of irrigation works as appearing in the accounts of the Revenue Department is also considerably less than that shown in the books of the Public Works Department. Wide divergences between the departmental and treasury accounts of collections also exist. Similar features appear to characterise the accounts of the Forest and Excise Departments. The revision of the tariff rates for valuation of cotton goods produced by the mills in Mysore had been neglected for over fifteen years. The Income-tax is an important and growing source of revenue and it is necessary to see that the Demand, Collection and Balance accounts relating to it are properly kept and also that assessment work receives timely and adequate attention. It is evident, therefore, that in the interests of revenue, the employment of special staff for the local examination of accounts of the more important of the revenue departments is an urgent necessity, specially in view of the instances which have come to notice where large sums have either been omitted to be booked or collected and thus lost to the State.

9. The expansion of the province of audit by including in it the audit of receipts of all accounts entails very heavy work and if this responsibility is imposed upon the existing Audit Department, its staff will have to be enormously increased in order to cope with it. Even as it is, the Comptroller's Office is overburdened with work and the question of its expansion is separately under consideration. Government do not, therefore, propose at the present stage to entrust to the Audit Department the responsibility for the audit of all the revenues of the Government; but they consider that, as a tentative measure, the officer selected as Inspector of Office Systems may be one who has had training in accounts work and required to undertake the revenue audit work in addition, as an experimental arrangement. As it will be obviously impossible for him to attend to this work in the State as a whole, he will confine himself for the present to the Mysore District. His duties under revenue audit will be mainly to see (1) that in each office, accounts and registers necessary for a complete record and an effective check of receipts are maintained, (2) that the arrangements for bringing on the demand registers the different items of revenue to be realised are satisfactory and that the records and the authorities on which the demand items are based are readily available for purposes of verification, (3) that the regulations and the procedure relating to assessment, collections and proper allocation of revenue are effective, (4) that remittances are made to the treasury within the prescribed time, (5) that collections claimed in the departmental accounts are agreed with the credits afforded in treasury accounts for remittances received, (6) that recoveries are made within the prescribed time, (7) that the accounts relating to demand, collection and balance are written up without delay, (8) that remissions and write-offs are according to rules and sanctioned by competent authorities and (9) that existing forms of accounts are suitable and if not to suggest improvements. The Revenue Audit contemplated here will extend for the present to Land Revenue, Excise Revenue, Forest Revenue, Income-tax, Stamps and Miscellaneous Land Revenue, such as sale of lands and contributions on account of irrigation works.

10. Separate orders will issue regarding the establishment, clerical and medial, to be allowed to the Inspector of Office Systems and Officer in charge of Revenue Audit. The extra cost involved in these arrangements for about six months during the current official year will be met from a supplementary grant for which a demand will be placed before the Legislative Council at its next meeting.

K. MATTHAN,
Chief Secretary to Government.

LOCAL AND LEGISLATIVE SECRETARIAT.

Reports on the working of the Town Municipal Councils in the State for 1922-23.

READ—

The reports on the working of the Town Municipal Councils in the State for 1922-23.

ORDER No. L. 3141-52—ML. 83-23-52, DATED 17TH OCTOBER 1924.

1. *Number and constitution.*—The number of Town Municipal Councils working during the year was 29. The Municipal Councils of Hassan, Tumkur, Kolar and

Chikmagalur had non-official Presidents, 27 councils had non-official Vice-Presidents, and two, viz., Kunigal and Chiknaykanhalli, had *ex-officio* Vice-Presidents.

2. *Strength and Election*.—The sanctioned number of Councillors was 498, of which the number of non-officials, elected and nominated was 235 and 157, respectively. Elections were held in 5 municipalities for the reconstitution of the councils and in 9 others for filling up casual vacancies. From the number of voters entitled to vote, in these areas and the number actually reported as having voted it is presumed that except in Kolar, Tarikere, Hassan and Bowringpet, the voters do not appear to have taken keen interest in electing their representatives.

3. *Meetings and Attendance*.—The total number of meetings held during the year was 512. Of these, 284 were ordinary, 126 special or extraordinary and 102 adjourned meetings. Though the councils met on the average 17 times a year, it is unsatisfactory that the number of ordinary meetings held by 10 Municipal Councils, viz., Mulbagal, Tarikere, Chintamani, Tiptur, Sira, Chikballapur, Chikmagalur, Hole-Narsipur, Channapatna and Tumkur was much less than the prescribed minimum. It is however satisfactory to note that the attendance of the members at both the ordinary and special meetings was on the whole fair. The average attendance of non-officials at all meetings was 8.24 against the sanctioned average strength of 13.51.

4. *Work of the Special Committees*.—Though 21 Municipal Councils had special and audit committees, no appreciable work has been done by these except in Harihar, Chikballapur, Davangere, Bowringpet, Shikarpur, Chintamani, Tumkur, Hassan and Shimoga and that special committees have yet to be formed in some localities. In view of the good results to be achieved by frequent and regular inspections in defined departments of Municipal Administration by Committees of Councils and the fact that special committees can solve important public questions with greater promptitude it is hoped that such committees will be constituted in municipalities where they do not exist at present and the existing committees would put forth better efforts and help the several councils in their administration.

5. *Rules and Bye-Laws*.—Rules and bye-laws were framed by the several municipal councils as given below:—

Chitaldrug.—Rules for the levy of profession tax.

Chikballapur.—Revised octroi bye-laws.

Kolar.—Bye-laws *re* levy of tolls on vehicles and animals.

Chintamani.—Bye-laws *re* levy of toll, octroi duty, Public Health.

Chamrajnagar.—Bye-laws relating to levy of taxes on bicycles and establishment of toll-gates.

Hole-Narsipur.—Bye-laws *re* profession tax, births and deaths managing committees, vaccination, hotels and numbering of vehicles.

Harihar.—Bye-laws for control of Slaughther houses and markets.

Maddagiri.—Bye-laws *re* births and deaths, vaccination, conservancy and sanitation, eating houses, slaughter houses, tax on professions and trades and octroi.

No serious attempt appears to have been made for the material revision of existing taxes or for the levy of fresh ones except in the following few cases:—

Chitaldrug.—Levy of tolls on through traffic.

Chikballapur.—Octroi on sugar and jaggory.

Chintamani.—Levy of professional tax in lieu of mohatarfa and shop taxes.

Hassan.—Revised rates of mohatarfa tax.

Channapatna.—Reduction of the rate of octroi duty on piece-goods and tobacco.

6. *Finance*.—The demand for the period under review was Rs. 6,44,164, out of which Rs. 5,96,184 was collected, leaving a balance of Rs. 47,980 at the end of the year. The collection work so far as the current revenue is concerned was on the whole good. But with regard to the arrear demand it has to be observed that many of the Municipal Councils have not taken prompt action in this respect, as out of the demand of Rs. 1,61,784 only a small sum of Rs. 38,017 was collected, a sum of Rs. 6,338 was remitted leaving a heavy balance of Rs. 1,17,429. Arrears are heavy in Davangere, Channapatna, Chikmagalur, Shimoga, Chitaldrug, Seringapatam, Hassan, Kolar and Nanjangud. Every effort should be made to collect all recoverable items and steps should be taken to write off such irrecoverable amount as only encumber the accounts.

The income and expenditure of the 29 councils during the year were respectively Rs. 6,98,602 and Rs. 6,97,272. The total closing balance at the credit of all the Municipal Councils was Rs. 5,11,242 against an opening balance of Rs. 5,09,912. The total

investment was Rs. 43,105. In many instances the expenditure was more than the receipts, viz., Seringapatam, Channapatna, Chikmagalur, Shimoga, Davangere, Harihar, Chitaldrug, Kolar and Tumkur and in only a few instances it was slightly less than the income. The financial condition of many of the Municipal Councils does not appear to be satisfactory and it behoves them to take steps to improve their resources and to reduce expenditure to the utmost possible extent.

7. *Incidence of Taxation.*—The total extent of the Town Municipal area in the State during the year was 45.08 square miles and the total population 225,389. The incidence of taxation per head of population ranged from Re. 0-4-4 in Doddballapur to Rs. 3-10-3 in Chikmagalur and in 14 municipal areas it exceeded Rs. 2. The average incidence works out to Rs. 1-10-8. As compared with 1919-20 when the incidence varied from Re. 0-11-0 to Rs. 5-14-8 and the average incidence was Rs. 2-0-2 per head, this should be considered as very low. There seems therefore ample scope for these councils to improve their sources of revenue by increasing the rate of existing taxes or by levy of new recognised imposts in places where they do not exist.

8. *Public Works.*—A sum of Rs. 1,21,195 was spent under this head both by the Public Works and Civil Departments. The amount spent by the Civil Department was mainly on account of repairs to roads the construction of drains and repairs thereto and other petty items.

Water Supply, Drainages, Town Improvements, etc.—(a) *Water Supply.* An estimate of Rs. 15,000, including Government grant of Rs. 4,000 was sanctioned in the year 1923, for improving the water supply plant of the Harihar Town and a grant of Rs. 13,770 was sanctioned for the improvement of Chintamani Town Water Supply.

(b) *Drainage.*—The drainage schemes prepared for the Nanjangud and Davangere Towns at an estimated cost of Rs. 89,000 and Rs. 81,687 respectively, had to be kept by for want of funds in the respective municipalities.

9. *Medical Relief and Vital Statistics.*—In the 34 Local Fund Dispensaries, 448,647 persons were treated and in the 7 Ayurvedic and Unani Dispensaries which existed in the area under review the number was 240,139. Thirty three midwives were maintained from Municipal funds and they attended to 3,016 labour cases. The number of persons vaccinated was 8,309. The number of births registered during the year was 5,762 while the number of deaths was 4,295 and plague was responsible for 739 deaths in 10 Municipal areas where effective measures were taken to prevent its spread. Other wise, public health in the several areas was on the whole good.

10. *Audit of accounts.*—The accounts of 22 Municipal Councils for the year were audited by the Audit Staff of the Comptroller's Office and the Special Audit Committees at Chikmagalur, Tarikere, Chitaldrug, Harihar and Tumkur also audited their accounts for certain periods and no serious irregularities were noticed except the one at Channapatna where a case of misappropriation of mohatarfa tax was detected, which ended in the conviction of the party concerned.

In this connection it is considered necessary to note that frequent inspections and prompt audit will go a great way to minimise even the minor irregularities and there will be much improvement in the maintenance of accounts. It is therefore incumbent on all Municipal Councils to see that in addition to the audit conducted by the Local Audit Staff of the Comptroller's Office, accounts are checked at least once every quarter as required by the rules by the Special Audit Committee.

11. *General.*—The cattle shows arranged in certain towns met with complete success. The non-official Vice-Presidents and the Councillors are reported to have taken keen interest in the administration of the municipal affairs.

As already stated above, the financial condition of some of the Municipal Councils has to be improved. It is hoped that the councils concerned will bestow attention on this matter and the next year's report will be one of progress in all directions.

B. NAGAPPA,
Secretary to Government,
Local and Legislative Departments.

REVENUE SECRETARIAT.

Relief of Distress in Kolar District.

READ—

Correspondence ending with letter No. D. 3, dated 11th October 1924, from the Revenue Commissioner in Mysore, recommending sanction to the proposal of the Deputy Commissioner, Kolar District, for additional allotments of Rs. 5,000 for Village Improvement works, Rs. 5,000 for Road works and Rs. 500 for gratuitous relief for the relief of distress in Goribidnur and Bagepalli Taluks.